

After by 14winters

Series: [Only Love \[4\]](#)

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: Angst, Domestic Fluff, Established Relationship, Fluff and Angst, Homophobic Language, Marijuana, Multi, Notfic, Period-Typical Homophobia, Polyamory, Recreational Drug Use, started out as headcanons turned into a small ficlet at the end

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Characters: Eleven, Jane "El" Hopper, Jane Hopper, Jim Hopper, Jonathan Byers, Joyce Byers, Nancy Wheeler, Steve Harrington, Will Byers

Relationships: Jonathan Byers/Steve Harrington/Nancy Wheeler

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Summary:

A short mostly fun summary of how I imagine Jonathan, Steve, and Nancy continuing their polyamorous relationship after the events of season 2.

After

Author's Note:

This was written as a response to a headcanon prompt that was just "stoncy through the seasons", and it went a bit farther than I thought it would. It exists in my extended AU for Stoncy, where I imagine they begin their poly relationship before the events of season 2. It refers to Stoncy fics I've already written, the chapter "Arrangements" from the *Cross Your Heart* series, and the chapter "seasons" in my oneshot series *Routines*.

Winter 1984-1985

Nancy remembers how chapped their lips were, when she and Steve kiss for the first time after their fight. The wind is vicious and she can't feel her fingers grasping his coat, but she feels his hands around her waist and that's all that matters.

When the three of them pile into the backseat of Jonathan's car, they can all see their breath, and it takes a long time for the car to warm up. But Nancy has her coat off long before then. Jonathan's hands are warm from being in his pockets, as he'd stood on the driver's side waiting for Nancy—and hopefully Steve, too. He ends up between Steve and Nancy in the backseat, Steve playfully applying Nancy's chapstick before he kisses him, while Nancy guides his right hand beneath her sweater to reveal she isn't wearing a bra.

Nancy counts down the days to Barb's funeral, and each night it's harder to go to bed. She barely sleeps. Eventually she doesn't even turn her lamp off. The night before the funeral she has both Steve and Jonathan sneak in and sleep beside her.

They all remain clothed and Nancy always remembers how her boys' clothes smell of snow and cold air, and how stiff Steve's hair is because he's recently showered and didn't let his hair dry before going outside. They let her babble on, about school, about Mike and Will and El, about the stupid Halloween party, about Murray, about

the Upside Down, and finally about Barb, until she can't hold back the tears anymore.

After Nancy tells them maybe eight or nine times it was okay for them to sleep, Steve and Jonathan doze for a bit. She holds both their hands, Jonathan's draped over her stomach, and Steve's laying across her chest, curled over her collarbone. She lets her tears dry on her face as she just lies still and listens to them breathing. Trying to think more about them being with her instead of who they'd be "burying".

Nancy waits until the last possible minute to wake them up. She knows her mother would be up at six. She watches the digital clock on her nightstand go from 5:20, to 5:21, 5:22...Finally at 5:30 she gives in and wakes them. The boys sneak back out to catch maybe a couple more hours of sleep before the funeral. Steve has to arrive separately in his own car.

Christmas is better. Nancy sneaks a bottle of champagne out of the house on December 26th, around 12:15am, when Jonathan pulls up with Steve in the front seat. She's still wearing her Christmas dinner dress, but snow boots instead of heels.

They go out to the junkyard and start a bonfire. This is how they like to celebrate. It's almost out in the open, outside of their own homes, but away from any unexpected company or prying eyes. They get drunk and high and drunk again, and exchange their gifts. Jonathan gives Steve a new coat, and Nancy the first mix tape he's ever made for her. Steve gives Jonathan a new Zippo lighter, and Nancy a gun. A real *gun*. "Pulled a few strings with the chief," he says, kissing the awed look off her face, grinning the whole time.

Most of what Nancy remembers from that night is the firelight in Steve and Jonathan's eyes after she gives them her gift, two rings on two silver chains. They're all close to tears. And the taste of roasted marshmallows and champagne together. And how weed, wood smoke, and snow smells together on Steve's coat that she wears on the ride home. Before she gets out of Jonathan's car, she tries to give his coat back to him, but he's still high and refuses to take it, and part of her doesn't want to let it go. They have to keep their secret, but she sleeps with Steve's coat that night, tucked against her chest. Her sheets smell of his hairspray and wood smoke the next morning.

When she sees Jonathan the next day she asks him if he'd gotten a picture of her last night wearing Steve's coat. Of course he did.

That particular coat keeps getting passed around. Since Jonathan got Steve a new coat for Christmas, he sees no problem with letting his gf and bf share the old one. No one but Karen, who has a sharp memory and thinks the coat is vaguely familiar and out of place, suspects anything.

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Spring 1985

It's Jonathan's favorite season, and the season of his birthday. It's also the season Steve graduates high school, and reveals he's choosing to stay in Hawkins and work at the mechanics shop. His parents are furious, and for a few weeks he has to sleep over at the Byers, while his dad's temper cools off.

He and Jonathan stay up past 1am nearly every night, watching movies, debating about different bands, Jonathan showing Steve how to make mix tapes. Steve also learns how Jonathan gives such great foot massages, and they give each other back massages until they're a hot, aching mess. They talk until their voices are hoarse, about their fathers yeah, but also about Nancy, about Will and Joyce, about Mike and Dustin and what's going to happen to Max and Lucas. They talk about the video games Steve loves that Jonathan just can't get into, how Jonathan learned to cook, when Steve smoked his first cigarette, when Jonathan smoked his first blunt. And a few times they talk until they start hearing birds chirping outside even though it's still pitch dark, and drift off giggling inside jokes at each other and trading teasing kisses that go deeper just before fatigue can take over.

Steve does household chores without being asked and Joyce can't dissuade him no matter how hard she tries. His dad doesn't allow him to use his car, so Jonathan helps him get to his new job for the first few weeks. Nancy is the first to storm over to the Harrington's and give Mr. Harrington a piece of her mind (as politely as she can). It works on Steve's mother, but not his father.

She does, however, get Steve's car keys back. She drives up the Byers'

driveway in Steve's car on a sunny Saturday afternoon, the most triumphant smile on her face. Steve picks her up and spins her around, kissing her soundly in front of Joyce and Will and El, prompting Joyce to do quite a bit of explaining to the two 14 year olds who've thought Nancy was just dating Jonathan this whole time.

Steve and Jonathan and Nancy of course do their part in the explaining, and Nancy begs Will to let her tell Mike, but to let this remain a secret for a little longer. (Hopper remains in the dark for a few more weeks.) El is of course completely trustworthy, and unabashedly intrigued, while Will remains confused but fully accepting. He and Jonathan have already talked a few times about Will's interest in boys by then.

Jonathan has to work a lot, so they celebrate his birthday after he's done with a long shift at the movie theater, nearing 2am. Steve brings a blunt for them all to smoke as a birthday surprise. Nancy *does* have to drive Jonathan home, though she offers as a courtesy more than anything. The next day Steve teases Jonathan about it mercilessly anyway, knowing Jonathan got most of the birthday blunt, and so was probably unfit to drive. Nancy later reveals that Steve fell asleep in Jonathan's backseat last night, and she couldn't wake him up (he sleeps like the dead) so they'd have to ride with Jonathan to work that afternoon so they could pick up Steve's car from the theater parking lot.

Steve and his dad eventually reconcile, but things remain cool between them. Steve spends far more time at the Byers than he does in his own home. This eventually results in Hopper accidentally finding out about their polyamorous relationship. He cuts off every single attempt Nancy makes to explain the relationship further to him, and Joyce eventually tells Nancy to let her do the talking. "He's not sexist, honey, he just doesn't like young people explaining new and unfamiliar things to him. He was like this when I first talked about smoking weed with him." Joyce says this completely within earshot of Hopper and she knows it.

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Summer 1985

Nancy gets a part time job as a waitress. Karen drives her most of the time, she doesn't get her own car. Sometimes she rides her bike though, and Steve is quick to point out how her legs have gotten more toned because of all the riding. This makes her blush crimson before she playfully punches both of her boyfriends in the arm for laughing.

Sometimes if their schedules coincide, Jonathan drives her to work. Steve usually picks her up, especially if her shifts go late, and they spend the night at the Byers'. Honestly if they're not spending the night at the Byers' it's because they're pooling their resources to get a cheap motel room somewhere outside the Hawkins city limits.

They do this at least four times throughout the summer. Twice Nancy pretends she's dating only Steve. The very last time they got a motel room, in August, at a motel they'd never been to, she pretends she's with both Steve and Jonathan, but separately, at different times, confusing the hell out of the staff.

They spend the fourth of July out by the lake closest to Hawkins. It had been over ninety degrees in the shade that day, and they go skinny dipping after dark. Steve hides Nancy's bikini, with Jonathan as his accomplice. But she couldn't care less because it's pitch dark except for moon and starlight and distant fireworks, and the only source of light out here is Jonathan's car, his Zippo lighter, and a few sparklers they got from the party. They don't even light a bonfire, it's so hot.

Nancy ends up falling asleep with only a duvet covering her, using Jonathan as a pillow, and Steve using *her* as a pillow. She wakes up first, maybe only a half hour after the sun rises, and drives them all back to the Byers (after finding her bikini hidden under the passenger seat, and stealing Steve's shirt right off his back—he sleeps through it of course). Jonathan wakes up during the drive and she tells him to let Steve sleep with a mischievous smile on her face.

El is the only one up and is making waffles for everyone. Nancy quietly enlists her help in waking up Steve. She gets a can of Reddi Whip and shows El how to coat Steve's hands in the stuff, then tickle his nose until he wakes up with the whipped cream all over his face. Nancy and Jonathan's carefree laughter prompt El to laugh too, and

she ends up laughing harder than she's ever laughed. Steve's surprise soon gives way to laughter too, and he eventually takes the Reddi Whip from Nancy and starts chasing her, trying to get as much as he can in her hair. The grass is still slick with morning dew and they both end up slipping and falling on each other, laughing until they're breathless. Jonathan then calmly walks up, takes the Reddi Whip, and sprays a neat little dollop on each of their heads, before walking back inside with El, yelling over his shoulder for them to clean each other up with the garden hose.

Jonathan goes back inside with El to help her finish breakfast. After Steve gets all the whipped cream off himself, Nancy gives him his shirt back. It's only slightly damp and reeks of lake water. Steve, seeing her back in her bikini, sprays her mercilessly with the garden hose, getting her soaked. She gets him back of course.

Steve ends up carrying Nancy into the house bridal style, both of them damp and grinning like idiots. Seeing Jonathan at the sink, and El and Will at the table, both of them hold a finger to their lips to signal the kids to stay quiet, and Steve sneaks up behind Jonathan with Nancy still in his arms.

Nancy, hoping the running water in the sink has masked their approach, leans close to Jonathan's ear and whispers, "You were gonna be our cherry on top," before she jumps out of Steve's arms and they tackle their boyfriend. The kitchen is suddenly full of yelling and laughter as Steve and Nancy shower Jonathan with damp kisses, tickling him and pulling him away from the sink, until they've both got him on the ground, tickling him until he's screaming laughing and then trying to tell them their waffles are getting cold, which only prompt them to tickle him more. Joyce and Hopper run in at all the noise, still half asleep, to find Will and El calmly eating waffles while all this is going on. And that's how they start off July 5, 1985.

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Fall 1985

Fall becomes the season for monster hunting.

Nancy makes the connection first. The demogorgons, the mind flayer,

they like it cold. The past two years in Hawkins, they've always been beaten before winter set in. The Hawkins gate is closed, but El helps them realize there's more than one gate that's been opened, and there are more monsters out there.

Hopper forbids them from leaving Hawkins when they bring it up. He says he'll follow the leads, tell them what he learns. Nancy demands to know if a monster has killed anyone outside of Hawkins. Hopper sees the vengeance and pain still burning in her eyes and knows he can't stop her, so he says he'll tell her *everything* he knows, as long as she stays put. For now.

Nancy goes to do target practice in the woods a lot more often. Jonathan and Steve are usually with her, but sometimes she wants to be alone. She keeps the part time waitress job, saves up, works late nights, takes advantage of her insomnia to study, catch up on homework. It gets harder to keep her relationship with both Steve and Jonathan a secret, harder to keep from telling her parents she's not going to some classy university next fall, she's going to go wherever Jonathan goes, and so is Steve. Just as long as it's far away from Hawkins, Indiana.

And she begins studying medicine, first aid. It's just a hobby, she thinks, at first. She likes science, maybe she'll pursue nursing. But then Jonathan gets in a fight.

Steve never stops beating himself up that he wasn't there. Jonathan and Nancy were walking to Jonathan's car after school, he could've met them there, like he had so many times before. But he'd been working.

A group of guys had surrounded them, accused Jonathan of being a fag, claimed they saw him kissing Steve Harrington. Jonathan said nothing. So they ambushed him. Nancy, powerless against four 18-19 year olds much bigger than her, got pushed away once, smacked the second time for trying to stop them. They only stopped when a teacher started coming over to see what was going on.

Jonathan was barely conscious, and his car was closer than the teacher. Nancy hurried to put Jonathan in the backseat, then sped off, heading for the hospital. She yelled at Jonathan to stay awake

until her voice was nearly gone, drowned out by her sobs and the aching in her skull.

Less than twenty-four hours after Jonathan is discharged from the hospital, Hopper comes by the Byers', knowing he'll find Nancy there.

She's dozing on the couch, Jonathan's head resting in her lap. Steve is sound asleep on Jonathan's other side, his hand resting in Jonathan's hair, where he'd fallen asleep in the middle of running his fingers through it. Jonathan's favorite, *Blade Runner*, is playing on the VCR for the fifth time that day. Neither Jonathan nor Nancy have been to school since it happened.

Nancy wakes up slightly at hearing Hopper enter, and resumes counting the stitches on Jonathan's face as if she'd never stopped. He almost lost vision in his right eye. Would he have still been able to do photography? She didn't want to think about it.

"Nancy," Hopper says, his large form blocking out the television. She looks blearily up at him, can't imagine why he's there.

"We found them," Hopper says, and holds two files out to her. She takes them.

"The boys that beat up Jonathan?" she asks, opening the top file. In the low lamplight, she recognizes four mug shots.

"Yeah, they weren't hard to find. But there's something else. The second file. Open it," Hopper says in his gruff way, indicating the second file with a small flick of his wrist at her.

She opens the second file. It's a case file from a precinct in Iowa. She scans the first page, zeroes in on the words "unsolved" and "suspected homicide". The victim is only fourteen years old. Missing for nearly a week.

"The first victim outside Hawkins," she whispers. She can't move her eyes from the document in front of her, even as her vision blurs, even as she feels Jonathan stir beside her.

She looks directly up at Hopper, sees his guarded expression. "You're going to let me kill it," she says, her voice louder.

“Nancy—”

“I turn eighteen in two weeks, you can’t stop me.” The file begins to shake in her hands. Hopper takes it from her, not too quickly. He kneels in front of her, so they’re at eye-level.

“If you break the law I can. Don’t go barreling into this before we know what we’re up against.” His voice is more hushed than hers. He’s never forgotten that they bugged his trailer. Nancy knows they haven’t bugged anything now, and his unnecessary caution only angers her further. She clenches her fists, swallows the words that want to break out.

Hopper doesn’t touch her. He knows better. But his eyes are steady on hers. “Listen to me. We’re going to get it. But you have to let me take the lead on this.”

Jonathan lifts his head from her lap, braces himself up on one arm. “Nancy? What is it?”

Nancy blinks, turns her head to face him. “Nothing. Hopper’s here. Do you need more meds?”

“I’ll get ‘em, Nance,” Steve’s voice, only a little heavy from sleep, sounds from Jonathan’s other side, and Nancy watches him rise and head for the kitchen. She absently kisses the top of Jonathan’s head, puts her hand on his cheek. “How are you feeling?”

“Head is pounding,” Jonathan murmurs, laying his head back down in her lap. She pets his hair, his shoulder, his arm, wishing she could absorb all his pain.

“We’ll talk more about this later,” Hopper says to Nancy. “Rest up, kid.” And he reaches out and pats Jonathan’s shoulder, before rising.

“Thanks,” Jonathan says drowsily, and Nancy looks down to see Jonathan closing his eyes again. Hopper opens the front door, puts his cowboy hat back in place, and then he’s gone.

Steve comes back in with a glass of water and Jonathan’s meds, gives Nancy a hard look. She just shakes her head. Later. They all settle back on the couch, much as they were before.

Nancy focuses back on the movie. It's about to end. She watches the Replicant become a corpse, the rain falling mercilessly over him. The stillness of his death encompassing the entire screen.

Feeling the heavy warmth of Jonathan's body against her, knowing she had almost lost him, makes her anger roil closer to the surface all over again. Her own words echo back at her. *I want to kill it.*

She feels Steve's fingers skate over her own, and clasps them. They exchange glances again, their joined hands resting on Jonathan's back. Steve glances at the screen and back at her, and she knows he'd heard. Heard everything she just said to Hopper.

The understanding she sees in Steve makes relief and pride join her anger. She smiles at Steve, and he smiles back, reassuring. Death isn't coming for them. It's coming for any monster that dares step out of the Upside Down.

I'm going to kill it.